

// A special meeting of the Council of the City of Lynchburg, recessed from May 10, was held on the 24th day of May, 2005, at 1:00 P.M., Second Floor Training Room, City Hall, Carl B. Hutcherson, Jr., President, presiding. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a work session regarding several items. The following Members were present:

Present: Dodson, Foster, Gillette, Helgeson, Johnson, Seiffert, Hutcherson

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Absent:

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// City Planner Tom Martin provided an overview regarding the Design Concept Plan for the Fifth Street Corridor prepared by the Fifth Street Community Development Corporation. Mr. Martin explained that staff is seeking general consensus from City Council on the concept plan before proceeding with final plan preparation. Mr. Martin went on to say that the Planning Commission passed a resolution in support of the concept plan. In response to questioning regarding the area designated for a skate rink, Mr. Martin stated that although a skate rink is one possibility for the site, staff would work closely with Parks and Recreation to determine what type of recreational activity could be developed for that site. Council Member Helgeson expressed concern that adoption of the concept plan without specifics may have a negative impact on future development of the area. Mr. Martin explained that staff is only requesting consensus to proceed with the development of the final plan, and that the final plan would be more detailed and would need to be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council. Following discussion, City Council reached consensus to allow staff to proceed with the preparation of the final plan for the Fifth Street Corridor.

// Albert Jennings, Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative, provided a brief overview regarding the establishment of a Community Action Network. City Manager Kimball Payne stated that a Board of Directors, consisting of the City Manager, Director of Parks and Recreation, a representative from Human Services, a representative from Lynchburg Community Action Group and citizens, including residents of inner city neighborhoods, would be established to provide guidance and oversight, fine tune the program goals and objectives, establish performance measures and ensure accountability. Mr. Payne went on to say that unexpended funds from the General Fund Reserve for Contingencies could be utilized to seed the Network for a period of one year at a cost of \$100,000, and that during the year, the program would be developed and evaluated and grant funding would be sought to establish it as a non-profit agency, or a program within an existing non-profit, addressing leadership, empowerment and other social issues in the inner city neighborhoods. Council Members discussed the merits of the program, and a majority of the Council Members indicated that although the program appeared to be a good idea, they needed to be provided a work plan, timeline, and a revised budget for the \$100,000 before giving final approval. City Manager Payne stated that staff would prepare the additional information and schedule this item for further discussion at the June 28 work session.

// Director of Waste Management Dave Owen along with Bob White, Deputy Director, Region 2000 Regional Commission, provided an overview regarding information contained in a Regional Solid Waste Management Analysis, prepared by R. W. Beck, Inc. Mr. White explained that in addition to the City, six

other local governments were evaluated – Amherst County, Campbell County, City of Bedford, Nelson County, Appomattox County and Bedford County, although Appomattox and Bedford Counties has decided not to formally participate in the regional effort. Mr. White then highlighted three key findings of the report -- (1) joint use of existing facilities represents the most viable disposal option for all of the participating communities, (2) for all communities, this option is better than the status quo and the other two regional alternatives, i.e., waste-to-energy and transfer station, and (3) participation from Appomattox and/or Bedford Counties could further increase economies of scale and reduce per ton costs. Mr. White then reviewed the six recommendations contained in the report, one of which would be the creation of a regional authority. Mr. White stated that staff is seeking approval from City Council to move forward with Phase II, at a cost of \$49,200, and that the funding for Phase II would come from the Solid Waste Management Fund. City Council reached consensus to allow staff to move forward with Phase II.

// City Manager Kimball Payne explained that during the budget deliberations there was a proposal to reduce the common goods fee from \$5.00 per month to a level estimated to exactly cover projected expenses to which the revenues apply in the Solid Waste Management Fund. Mr. Payne noted that the common goods fee was implemented in January 2004 to pay for certain residential and community solid waste management services that had previously been funded by the Solid Waste Management Fund balance, and that the fee was established as part of the effort to bring the fund onto a solid financial footing and was chosen in lieu of several alternatives including additional support from the General Fund or an increase in the decal/tag fees. Mr. Payne went on to say that costs for these services are projected to increase approximately 2.0% for the upcoming 2006 Fiscal Year, that the flat fee necessary to cover services would be \$4.39, and that a reduction in the flat fee to \$4.39 would save each household \$7.32 per year and would reduce revenues to the Solid Waste Management Fund by \$141,400. Mr. Payne suggested that an alternative would be to reduce the General Fund support for refuse collection by that amount, in essence providing additional resources for General Fund activities. City Council briefly discussed the proposal to reduce the common goods fee and asked that the item be added to the June 14 regular agenda for vote. City Council also asked that staff provide various options, including the resulting fiscal impact, if the fee were reduced to \$4.50, \$4.39, \$4.75 or left at \$5.00, and what the fee would need to be to completely eliminate the subsidy from the General Fund.

// Deputy City Manager Bonnie Svrcek, Assistant Director of Financial Services Donna Witt, along with Commissioner of the Revenue Mitch Nuckles provided an overview regarding a proposal to change the vehicle license fee process and billing periods for personal property, business personal property, and machinery and tools taxes. Ms. Witt explained that staff recommends the following: eliminate the issuance of a decal; assess and charge the license fee as it currently exists to vehicles with active state registrations; bill semi-annually (payments due June 5 and December 5) for personal property, business personal property, and machinery and tools taxes; bill annually for the license fee on the personal property tax bill (June 5); and implement filing by exception. Ms. Witt then outlined the advantages and disadvantages to the proposal, noting that in the year of implementation, accelerating the collection of half

the personal property, business personal property and machinery and tools from November to June will have an impact on the citizens and the business community due to an unplanned June payment. Ms. Witt went on to say that for implementation purposes, it is recommended that these changes become effective January 1, 2006. Ms. Svrcek explained that the City would experience a one-time infusion of funds due to the first half-year personal property, business personal property and machinery and tools tax being due June 5, 2006, and it is estimated that this would generate approximately \$6.0 million in unanticipated one-time revenue in FY 2006. Ms. Svrcek went on to say that since the vehicle license fee period would be changed to a calendar year (January 1- December 31) to correspond with the personal property tax year, and due to pro-ration of the fee, this change in the vehicle license fee period would result in a one-time, first year revenue loss of approximately \$450,000. City Council asked that this item be scheduled for public hearing at the July meeting to allow time for comments on the proposal and the impact that it would have on businesses.

// Economic Development Director Mary Jane Russell provided a brief update regarding the construction of an industrial road and water main in the Lynchpin Industrial Center, noting that the project will serve two new industries, i.e., Boxley Block and AIT.

// City Manager Kimball Payne stated the Lynchburg Parking Authority was established on October 11, 1994, in compliance with enabling legislation adopted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1974, and that the membership consisted of five members including two Council members. Mr. Payne went on to say that legislation adopted by the 1995 session of the General Assembly amended the original statute and set the membership on the Parking Authority at seven (7), however, the authority continued to operate with only five members, meeting periodically into 1999, and that the terms of all current members have expired. Mr. Payne stated that staff is recommending that the Parking Authority be reestablished and that Council appoint seven members, including two members of City Council, the Executive Director of Lynch's Landing, a private individual involved in parking operations downtown, a representative of a major operation requiring parking, an individual with financial expertise, and another individual of Council's choosing, and that City staff would provide administrative support to the authority. Mr. Payne explained that the initial responsibilities of the Parking Authority could be as follows: review the enabling legislation; review the resolution creating the Parking Authority and suggest appropriate revisions, including a clear articulation of the purposes of the authority; review past actions of the Parking Authority and past studies regarding parking downtown; gather input on the current situation, including interviews with major users and other interested parties; examine economic issues related to parking including costs, potential revenues and financing options; develop a work plan and timetable to address challenges and opportunities; and consider the creation of public/private partnerships to provide parking. Following discussion, City Council agreed to reestablish the Lynchburg Parking Authority, to consist of seven members to be appointed by City Council, and that those appointments would be considered at the June 14 meeting.

// During roll call, and in response to questioning concerning current discussions regarding revisions to the City's landscape ordinance, City Manager Kimball Payne stated that the Planning Commission will present

its annual report to City Council in July, and the scheduling of any new projects such as the landscape ordinance would be included in that report. Council Member Helgeson requested staff to investigate a concern regarding a tree that needs to be trimmed located in the City right-of-way on East Grand Avenue.  
// The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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Clerk of Council